

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1 to 7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus ~~equipped with a process cartridge detachable therefrom~~ to which a process cartridge is detachably attachable, the process cartridge including an element relating to image formation, said image forming apparatus comprising:

~~an image forming means for driving~~ unit adapted to drive the process cartridge to form an image;

~~a counting means for counting~~ unit adapted to count a drive time of the process cartridge driven by said image forming ~~means~~ unit; and

~~changeover means for changing over~~ a switching unit adapted to switch an image forming condition of said image forming ~~means~~ unit on the basis of an accumulation of the drive time counted by said counting ~~means~~ unit,

wherein when the accumulation of the drive time counted by said counting ~~means~~ unit reaches a predetermined value, said switching unit switches ~~changeover means~~ determines a changeover timing so that the image forming condition may be changed over at a timing which is after completion of a job for forming a plurality of images and not during image formation.

9. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the process cartridge is provided with a non-volatile memory medium for storing a count value of said counting ~~means~~ unit.

10. (Previously Added) An image forming apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the non-volatile memory medium is a ferromagnetic memory or a ferroelectric memory.

11. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said ~~changeover means changes over~~ switching unit switches the image forming condition at a timing when said image forming ~~means~~ unit does not perform an electrophotographic process.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A control method for an image forming apparatus ~~equipped with~~ to which a process cartridge ~~detachable therefrom~~ is detachably attachable, the process cartridge including an element relating to image formation, said control method comprising:

a step of counting a drive time of the process cartridge driven in the image forming apparatus;

a step of ~~judging~~ determining whether an accumulation of the drive time counted in said counting step reaches a predetermined value; and

a step of ~~changing over~~ switching an image forming condition of the image forming apparatus at a timing which is after completion of a job for forming a plurality of images and ~~when the image forming apparatus is not conducting~~ during image formation, when it is ~~judged~~ determined in said ~~judging~~ determining step that the accumulation of the drive time reaches the predetermined value.

14. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said switching unit switches the image forming condition at a timing when a sheet is not conveyed.

15. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said switching unit switches a primary charging current.

16. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said counting unit counts a drive time of a photosensitive drum comprised in the process cartridge.

17. (New) An image forming apparatus to which a process cartridge is detachably attachable, the process cartridge including an element relating to image formation, said image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming unit adapted to drive the process cartridge to form an image;

a counting unit adapted to count a drive time of the process cartridge driven by said image forming unit; and

a switching unit adapted to switch a primary charging current of said image forming unit on the basis of an accumulation of the drive time counted by said counting unit,

wherein when the accumulation of the drive time counted by said counting means reaches a predetermined value, said switching unit switches the primary charging current at a timing which is not during image formation.

18. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the process cartridge is provided with a non-volatile memory medium for storing a count value of said counting unit.

19. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the non-volatile memory medium is a ferromagnetic memory or a ferroelectric memory.

20. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said switching unit switches the primary charging current at a timing when said image forming unit does not perform an electrophotographic process.

21. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 17, wherein in the case of execution of a job for forming a plurality of images, said switching unit switches the primary charging current after completion of the job.

22. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said switching unit switches the primary charging current at a timing when a sheet is not conveyed.

23. (New) An image forming apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said counting unit counts a drive time of a photosensitive drum comprised in the process cartridge.

24. (New) A control method for an image forming apparatus to which a process cartridge is detachably attachable, the process cartridge including an element relating to image formation, said control method comprising:

a step of counting a drive time of the process cartridge driven in the image forming apparatus;

a step of determining whether an accumulation of the drive time counted in said counting step reaches a predetermined value; and

a step of switching a primary charging current of the image forming apparatus at a timing which is not during image formation, when it is determined in said determining step that the accumulation of the drive time reaches the predetermined value.

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment accompanies a Request For Continued Examination and an Information Disclosure Statement. In the foregoing amendment, Claim 12 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein, and new Claims 14 to 24 have been added. Accordingly, Claims 8 to 11 and 13 to 24 are currently in the application, with Claims 8, 13, 17 and 24 being the independent claims. Entry of the foregoing amendment and passage to allowance are respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California, office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



Attorney for Applicant

Registration No. 30,957

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-2200
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

CA_MAIN 65845 v 1